

10 AUG 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Career Management Officer, DD/A

FROM :

STAT SUBJECT : Sub-Career Service for Agency Records
Management Personnel

1. With respect to your request that a paper be developed to determine the need for a separate sub-career service for Agency records management personnel, the following is provided for your consideration.

STAT 2. Background: states that the Deputy Director for Administration (DD/A) "is responsible for issuing guidelines, plans and objectives covering the direction, scope, and content of the Agency Records Management Program. The Chief, Information Systems Analysis Staff will serve as the Agency Records Management Officer to audit the program in his behalf." The Agency's program is decentralized with each Deputy Director, Head of Independent Office and Operating Official appointing a Records Management Officer (RMO) to administer the records program within their jurisdiction. Although generally cooperating with the C/ISAS in carrying out the Agency's records program, the RMO's are accountable only to their component supervisor.

3. Factors to be Considered:

a. Agency management is generally not familiar with the concept of a Records Management Program as required by law for all Federal agencies, nor are they aware of all the advantages of such a program.

b. An Agency-wide sub-career service would require some centralized management of personnel and positions.

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c. The DD/O has a formal career management program for RMO's in that Directorate. The DD/A, DDI, DDS&T and the Independent Offices have no formal system for managing the careers of their RMO's. (The only exception is the Office of Communications.)

d. A large number of the RMO's assumed their current duties with little experience and/or interest in records management, have had minimal training and perform other functions in addition to records management.

e. Full-time RMO's may not be required in all Agency components.

f. Not all current RMO's are willing and/or qualified to join a records management sub-career service.

g. Records management positions throughout the Agency may not be sufficiently similar to permit rotational assignments of records personnel.

h. Registry personnel should not automatically be included in the career service.

i. If an Agency-wide sub-career service for records officers is considered feasible, a timetable must be developed for gradual implementation.

4. Alternatives: The following alternatives or combinations thereof should be considered:

a. Take no further action, but continue to operate the Agency's program as in the past.

b. With management approval, review records management positions and personnel to determine the feasibility and need for a career service:

(1) In all Directorates and Independent Offices or

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(2) In selected Directorates and/or
Independent Offices or

(3) In the DD/A only.

5. Discussion of Alternatives:

a. To suggest that the Agency continue to manage the careers of records personnel as in the past is to indicate that some system of career management, although decentralized, must now exist. While the DDO has a formal program, as does the Office of Communications in the DD/A, the balance of the Agency components, including the Independent Offices in the DCI area have no formal system for managing the careers of RMO's. In many instances, records management duties are delegated as a part-time responsibility to personnel with no experience, training or interest in the job. Obviously this results in a wide range of performance levels. For example, records management is the responsibility of a Plans Officer in the Office of Security, the Logistics Officer in the Office of Data Processing, the Registry Chief in the Office of Weapons Intelligence, Administrative Officers in the Offices of Technical Services and Current Intelligence and a Librarian in the Central Reference Service. All of these Officers make a conscientious effort, but their primary responsibility and obviously their major interest is in another field. Another problem is typified by the Logistics Officer mentioned who is now being re-assigned to another position where he will not be involved with records management. A replacement must now be trained to handle a very important records program. If recent history suggests that the Agency's Records Management Program has not been satisfactory, one reason for this problem must be the personnel assigned records management responsibilities, their selection, training and management. This would suggest that changes are needed.

b. Efforts to establish an Agency-wide sub-career service must be preceded by total Agency management's agreement that a change is necessary and willingness to relinquish some control to a centralized career management group of most, if not all, of their records

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management personnel and the positions they now occupy. This would be a major achievement considering the historical independence of each Directorate. The DDO, with its own and reasonably effective career management program for records officers, would demand proof (and reasonably so) that an alternate program would be a more effective substitute for their rather unique program. Such an all-encompassing career service could only come about after a detailed study of records management positions in the Agency to identify those positions with sufficient homogeneity to allow inter-Directorate or inter-Office transfers of personnel. In addition, the training, skills and interests of records officers now assigned to the various records management positions must be evaluated to identify those with sufficient flexibility to move from one Directorate or Office to another without additional training, those who need further experience and/or training, and those who perhaps should not be in records management. These evaluations could be conducted by members of ISAS in conjunction with the Directorate Records Management Officers or their representatives. Not all personnel performing records management duties now would qualify for or be interested in membership in a records management sub-career service. Advantages and disadvantages of membership must be clearly identified. Because of the independence of Agency components, the various skill levels of Agency records management personnel and the massive effort which would be required to make the necessary evaluations, it is unlikely that constructive results would be forthcoming in a reasonable period of time if all Agency records personnel were to be included in the initial review.

c. In lieu of the alternative above, a similar study including fewer components could be conducted. The selected Directorates and Offices could be those considered readily adaptable, willing and able to benefit substantially from a centrally monitored sub-career service. Again, management in these organizations must be willing to relinquish some control over certain positions and personnel if a review indicated the feasibility of a career service.

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If a limited service proved effective, then perhaps other components could be invited to join. Since the DDO has a program in operation, this Directorate could be excluded at least initially.

d. Prior to involving the Independent Offices or the other Directorates, a review of records officers and positions could be conducted only in the Offices in the DD/A, using the attached information from these Offices as a data base. A thorough review of the adequacy of the existing records programs in each Office should be made by the ISAS to determine whether the program is comprehensive. This is particularly true in those Offices where the records officer devotes only part-time to these duties. The programs managed by Officers devoting full-time to records management could also be reviewed to determine whether the benefits derived are worth the time devoted and efforts are channeled in the right direction. Concentrating initially on the DD/A would be a simpler task and if a sufficient number of qualified RMO's and positions with similar duties were identified, these, plus those in the ISAS, could serve as a nucleus for a records management sub-career service. Then, at a later date, other Directorates and Offices could be invited to participate.

6. General Discussion:

a. Before any discussion of a career service takes place, there should be some assurance that Agency management is familiar with the legal requirements for, and the content of, a Records Management Program. This is essential to understand the functions and need for RMO's throughout the Agency.

b. The problem of the part-time RMO and how they would relate to a records management career service must be addressed since there are many of them throughout the Agency. Several alternatives are available, but none can be applied until the individual jobs are reviewed to determine whether the individual Office need is for a full or part-time position. Full-time positions are susceptible

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to career service management. Part-time positions that are indeed part-time can be handled in at least two ways. First, they can be excluded from consideration. Second, if more than one part-time position exists in a Directorate, perhaps one well-trained RMO could be given the full-time responsibility for the records programs in more than one Office. This individual could report to the Directorate RMO or to the Chief/ISAS. Obviously this requires negotiations among Office heads and, since the condition is so prevalent, it is another good reason for proceeding slowly with the career service concept.

b. Registry personnel are not necessarily familiar with good records management practices. Therefore, initially, it would not seem advisable to include them in the career service. However, with proper training, these employees could be a good source of future records officers and if a records management career service proves successful, consideration might be given at some future date to include registry personnel as junior members of the service.

c. Since some elements of records management are becoming more and more technically oriented, continued training and updating of skills becomes increasingly important. Word processing, micrographics, data processing and the like require that records managers expand their knowledge by attending the appropriate training programs. With or without a career service, it behooves the Agency to not only encourage but to require records personnel to have some knowledge of all these new fields.

d. Discussions with the Directorate RMO's reveal various attitudes toward an Agency-wide career service. The DDI RMO is satisfied with the existing system since it works to her satisfaction. However, her views may be somewhat biased because she has been successful in gaining the support of her supervisor for the records program at the Directorate level. References to the Office RMO's in the DDI, all of whom are part-timers, indicate that few are well trained and involved in all phases of records management. Knowing the ability of these RMO's, the DDI RMO often bypasses some of them and obtains needed information elsewhere, i.e., the Administrative or Logistics Officer. Unfortunately this does

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not enhance the position of the component RMO who should be responsible for all elements of the program--even if some encouragement is needed to secure their participation. The DDS&T RMO is very much interested in an Agency-wide career service because he feels there are no career advancement opportunities in the DDS&T for the Office RMO's. He recently drafted a career service proposal for DDS&T records and registry personnel which initially had management support. Unfortunately, this support no longer exists. The DDA RMO believes that an Agency-wide career service is needed to provide RMO's with career advancement opportunities. She further believes that while it would be difficult to implement Agency-wide all at once, this is the way it should be done. As I mentioned before, the DDO has a records management career service which now includes all registry personnel. The DDO RMO stated that while it is time-consuming, the program is effective and satisfies their needs. It is interesting to note that only the DDO RMO made any direct reference to the advantages of a career service to the Agency and getting a job done. The others spoke primarily of a career service as providing records officers with a means for advancement.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations:

a. It is evident that there is no simple procedure for establishing a records management sub-career service, either Agency-wide or on a more limited scale. And, with the information on hand, a clear-cut recommendation for or against such a service cannot be made. Nevertheless, the DD/A as the Agency Official responsible for the total records management program, can initiate a review within the DD/A to evaluate the program and explore the career service concept within the Directorate. Therefore, the following recommendations are submitted:

(1) A program should be developed by the ISAS to brief Agency management on the contents of and legal requirements for a records management program. This should include the benefits to be derived from such a program operated by professional,

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career-oriented records management officers.

(2) Limit initial consideration of a sub-career service to components in the DD/A. The ISAS should participate by:

(a) Conducting the review of positions and personnel described in paragraph 5d and making appropriate recommendations to the DD/A.

(b) Developing a list of required and desirable training courses for RMO's.

(c) Participating in the selection, training and evaluation of DD/A Office RMO's.

(3) The DD/A should recommend to the DDCI that a full-time professional records management officer be appointed to implement the program throughout the DCI area. Since the records officers in the Independent Offices are all part-timers with little knowledge of the profession, a senior records management careerist from the DD/A should be considered for this position.

(4) Records management specialists in the MG sub-career service should not be ranked or considered for promotion with generalists in the MG sub-career service. Their professions are different. Including a specialist on the sub-panel performing the evaluations does not eliminate this difference. Evaluations should be conducted by the C/ISAS, ISAS Branch Chiefs, CMO/DDA and the A/DDA.

(5) Begin a program of identifying and training junior personnel who one day will serve as records management officers. While some may come from registries, advanced technologies would suggest that college graduates in certain information specialties should also be considered.

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b. The success of this effort rests basically on the agreement of the DD/A that improvements are necessary and his willingness to direct positive action on the part of his Office Directors. For instance, if ISAS concludes that full-time professionals are needed to operate the records management program in the Offices of Security and Data Processing, these Offices or the ODDA should identify positions for these specialists. Without the full support of the DD/A, progress will be limited.



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